

## **Suggested Guidelines for Preparing Grant**

### **Summary**

At the beginning of your proposal, or on a cover sheet, write a two- or three-sentence summary of the proposal. This summary helps the reader follow your argument in the proposal itself. For example: "County V.F.D requests \$15,000 to establish a Firewise Board and hire a contractor to do a community risk assessment."

### **Organization Information**

In one to two paragraphs, tell about your organization and why it can be trusted to use funds effectively. Briefly summarize your organization's history. Describe your budget size, where you are located and who runs the organization and does the work. Add other details that build the credibility of your group. If other groups in your region work on the same issues, explain how they are different and how you collaborate with them, if you do. Even if you have received funds from us before, your introduction should be complete. A committee reviews the proposals for funding and they may not have heard of you before.

### **Problem/Need/Situation Description**

This is where you convince the division that the issue you want to tackle is important. Here are some tips:

- Why is this situation important? To whom did your organization talk, or what research did you do, to learn about the issue and decide how to tackle it?
- Describe the situation in both factual and human interest terms, if possible. Providing good data demonstrates that your organization is expert in the field. If there are no good data on your issue, consider doing your own research study, even if it is simple.
- Describe your issue in as local a context as possible. If you want to educate people in your county about the risk of wild fires, tell the division about the problem in your county — not in Kentucky as a whole.
- Describe a problem that is about the same size as your solution. Don't draw a dark picture of county funding problems, lack of equipment, etc. if you are planning a modest neighborhood education program. Remember you have a little less than a year to complete the project.

### **Work Plan/Specific Activities**

Explain what your organization plans to do. You might say: "This project is to promote community wildfire hazard awareness through the use of workshops, events, pamphlets, brochures, and other fire mitigation educational materials". Then go on to give details, including:

- Who is the target audience, and how will you involve them in the activity? How many people do you intend to serve? How will you ensure that people actually participate in the program?
- What are you going to do? Describe the activities. Tell the division about the project's "output," or how many "units of service" you intend to deliver over a specific time period: how many workshop hours do you plan on conducting? How many educational materials do you plan on distributing?, etc. Be sure you don't promise an unrealistic level of service.
- What project planning has already taken place? If you have already done research, secured the commitment of participants or done other initial work, describe it so the division can see that you are well-prepared.
- Who is going to do the work? Do you plan on hiring a Firewise educator, a consultant, a program manager?
- When will the project take place? This grant is from September 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. In general, a project can be said to start when you start spending money on it. If the project has multiple steps, consider including a timeline.

- Where will the project take place?

You may not know the answers to all these questions when you submit your proposal. But the more you know, the better the proposal will look. Many project descriptions are too vague. Remember: You can continue to submit updated information to the division almost until the date the committee actually reviews the proposal.

### **Outcomes/Impact of Activities**

What do you hope to achieve from this project? For example: "We plan on assessing 300 homes in our district, following up with those found to be in a high risk category, and mitigating one high risk home as an example for others to follow."

### **Other Funding**

Here the division wants to know if other organizations have committed funds to the project or been asked to do so. In this section, you can also describe the in-kind contributions (goods or services instead of cash) that people are giving to the project.

### **Future Funding**

If you continue this project in the future, how will it be supported? What the division really wants to see is that you have a long-term vision and funding plan for the project, that the project is "sustainable," especially if it is a new activity. We realize that future plans may rely on available funds but start thinking about it.

### **Evaluation**

How will you know whether you achieved the desired impacts? If you have done a good job of defining them, all you need to do here is describe the information you will gather to tell how close you came. Will you keep records of houses assessed? Will you ask home owners if they plan on practicing any of the Firewise tips? Explain who will gather the evaluation information and how you will use it. Be sure your evaluation plan is achievable given your resources. If the evaluation will cost money, be sure to put that cost in the project budget.

### **Budget**

How much will the project cost? Be as specific as possible. Note: Be sure to add up all your expenses carefully. Incorrect addition on budgets is one of the most common errors in a grant proposal.

### **Expenses**

Divide the expense side into three sections:

- Personnel Expenses
- Direct Project Expenses
- Administrative or Overhead Expenses

Personnel Expenses include the expenses for all the people who will work on the project. They may be employees of your organization or independent contractors. If they are employees, list the title, the annual pay rate and, if the person will be working less than full-time or less than 12 months on the project, the portion of time to be dedicated to the project. For example, if an employee will work half-time on the project from October through May:

Firewise Educator (\$35,000 x 50% x 8 months) = \$11,667 (This is what you would ask for in the grant)

Direct Project Expenses are non-personnel expenses you would not incur if you did not do the project. They can be almost anything: travel costs, printing, space or equipment rental, or supplies. NOTE: meeting expenses such as food is not covered.

Remember that you will have to live with this budget; you can't go back to the division and ask for more money because you forgot something. Think carefully about all the expenses you will have. If you will be

printing a brochure or renting a piece of equipment, don't guess at the cost. Call and ask for a rough estimate.

Administrative or Overhead Expenses are non-personnel expenses you will incur whether or not you do the project. But if you do the project, these resources can't be used for anything else. For example, if you pay \$500 a month for an office with space for four employees, you will continue to rent the office even if the project doesn't happen. But if the project does happen, one-quarter of the office space will be occupied by the project director. So you can charge for one-quarter of your office rent, utilities and administrative costs, such as phone, copying, postage and office supplies.

### Contributed Income

Contributed Income comes in two categories: cash and in-kind. Show cash contributions first and indicate whether each item is received, committed, pending (you've made the request but no decision has been made) or to be submitted. For example:

Ardendale Community Foundation (received)	\$5,000
City of Ardendale (committed)	\$2,500
Acme Widget Corporation (pending)	\$3,300
Jones Family Foundation (to be submitted)	\$4,000

In-kind contributions are gifts of goods or services instead of cash. They can include donated space, materials or time. If you list in-kind contributions as income in your budget, you must also show the corresponding expenses. If someone gives you something at a major discount, you would show the whole expense and then list the portion being donated under in-kind contributions. Here are some examples:

<b>Expenses:</b>	
Classroom rental	\$1,500
Curriculum consultant	\$2,000
Teacher aides (4 x 40 hours each x \$5/hour)	\$800
<b>In-kind contributions:</b>	
Ardendale Community Ed. (classroom rental)	\$1,500
Jane Doe (curriculum consultant)	\$1,000
Parents of students (teacher aides)	\$800

In this example, Jane Doe, the curriculum consultant, is doing the work for half-price, while the parents are volunteering as teacher aides.

In-kind contributions can be important for three reasons:

1. It shows all the ways in which the community is supporting your project, even though not everyone is giving cash.
2. It shows the true cost of the project -- what you would have to spend without the community support. If you want to show in-kind for these reasons, you can either show it in the budget, as above, or simply add a footnote to the bottom of the budget, like this: "This project will also receive more than \$3,000 of in-kind support from the school district, participating parents and various education professionals".
3. Since this is a matching grant, if you want to use in-kind contributions as part of your match, then you must put a dollar value on them and put them in the budget.

### Example of 20% match using in-kind contributions:

#### Project Budget:

Firewise coordinator (300 hours @ \$25/hour)     \$7,500

Chipper	\$8,000
Newspaper Ads (5 x \$100)	\$500
Signage for Firewise example home	\$500
Fuel removal (100 homes x \$25/home)	\$2,500
Supplies (computer paper, pens, etc.)	<u>\$1,500</u>
Total:	\$20,500

$\$20,500 \times .80$  (represents 80% of total) = \$16,400 (total amount that can be paid by grant)  
 $\$20,500 - \$16,400 = \$4,100$  (20% match needed)

Match:

Training: 12 volunteers x 3 hours x \$10/hour (manning Firewise booth)	\$360
ABC Trucking (\$200/day x 10 days to remove mulch)	\$2,000
Rent for coordinator (6 mo. x \$250/mo.)	\$1,500
Local newspaper (1 ad)	\$100
Community Firewise Preparedness Plan (100 hrs @ \$10/hr)	<u>\$1,000</u>
Total	\$4,960

These numbers are all fictional but they should give an idea of how to determine your 20% match.